

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 13-28, 31-33, 35-37, 40-45, and 47-50 are pending in the application, with Claims 1, 14, 17, 26, 42, 44, and 48 being independent. Claims 1, 2, 42, and 44 have been amended herein. Among the pending claims, Applicant notes with appreciation that Claims 14-28, 31-33, 35-37, 40, 41, and 48-50 have been allowed.

In view of the amendments above and the remarks below, Applicant respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-7, 9, 10, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,278,601 (Kawanami) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,485,200 (Shimizu). Claims 42 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,159,370 (Takahashi) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,475,456 (Haraguchi). Claims 44, 45, and 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Takahashi.

Without conceding the propriety of the rejections, and to advance prosecution, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 2, 42, and 44 to even more clearly recite the features of Applicant's claimed invention.

Independent Claim 1

Independent Claim 1 relates to an image pickup apparatus having a camera body and a lens unit. The apparatus includes a ring member, detection means, control means, and motion direction setting means. The ring member drives the lens unit and the detection means detects a change amount of a rotation of the ring member. The control

means is arranged in the lens unit and performs motion/stop control of at least the lens unit along an optical axis in accordance with a detection result by the detection means.

The motion direction setting means of Claim 1 is arranged in the camera body and permits a user to set a desired motion direction of the lens unit relative to the rotation direction of the ring member. The motion direction setting means includes character display means, display means for displaying an image picked up by the image pickup apparatus, a menu function unit for controlling the character display means, and an operation switch. The operation switch controls the menu function unit in accordance with an operation state thereof to display a predetermined menu on a display screen of the display means. The operation switch also operates on the predetermined menu displayed on the display means to select a desired setting item from among a plurality of items of the predetermined menu displayed on the display means by the menu function unit. The operation switch also sets a condition regarding the motion direction of the lens unit. An example of an embodiment of the operation switch is switch 217, discussed in the specification at, for example, page 72, lines 4-22, and shown in Figure 15B.

Applicant submits that Kawanami, alone or in combination with Shimizu, do not teach or suggest the features recited in independent Claim 1. Specifically, Kawanami relates to an optical apparatus including a driving part for driving an optical member such as a lens. Applicant submits that Kawanami does not disclose menu setting means and an operation switch with the functionality recited in independent Claim 1 and discussed above. Shimizu, directed to an operational information renewing and memorizing apparatus for a photographing instrument discloses a menu display screen, but

fails to teach or suggest an operation switch having the functionality recited in amended Claim 1.

Applicant further submits that neither Kawanami nor Shimizu contain an inherent disclosure of an operation switch with the functionality recited in independent Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent Claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over Kawanami, alone or in combination with Shimizu.

Independent Claim 42

Independent Claim 42 is also directed to an image pickup apparatus. The apparatus of Claim 42 includes a ring member, detection means, control means, and inhibition means. The ring member is disposed concentrically about a lens optical axis of a lens unit. The detection means detects a change amount of rotation of the ring member. The control means performs motion/stop control of at least a magnification lens group along the optical axis in accordance with a detection result by the detection means. The inhibition means inhibits the control means from starting the stop control for a predetermined period when the detection means detects a stop of rotation of the ring member to continue the motion control of the magnification lens group based on the detection of the rotation of the ring member.

With the features recited in amended Claim 42, the apparatus inhibits the lens control means from starting the stop control for a predetermined time period when stoppage of the rotation of the ring member is detected. In this way, motion control of the

lens group is continued based on the detection of the rotation of the ring member. An example of an embodiment of the invention recited in Claim 42 is described in the ninth embodiment, described in the specification at page 81, line 24, *et seq.*, with particular reference to Figure 24B.

Applicant submits that Takahashi, alone or in combination with Haraguchi, fails to teach or suggest the features of independent Claim 42. Applicant submits that Takahashi fails to teach at least the feature of Claim 42 of inhibition means. Applicant further submits that Haraguchi does not cure this deficiency. Haraguchi, in Applicant's understanding, discloses lens stop control performed (or started) after a lens stop command is issued. Thus, Haraguchi fails to teach or suggest inhibiting the control means from starting the stop control itself for a predetermined period when the detection means detects a stop of rotation of the ring member.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 42 is patentably distinguishable from Takahashi, alone or in combination with Haraguchi.

Independent Claim 44

Independent Claim 44 is also directed to an image pickup apparatus including a ring member and detection means as recited in Claim 42. The apparatus of Claim 44 also includes control means for controlling motion of a magnification lens group in accordance with an output of the detection means to perform motion start control of the magnification lens group along the optical axis. The apparatus of Claim 44 also includes change means for changing a sensitivity of motion start control of the control means

relative to a detection result of the detection means so that the control means does not start the motion start control until an amount of rotation of the ring member, corresponding to the sensitivity, is detected by the detection means.

With the features recited in amended independent Claim 44, the image pickup apparatus is arranged to change a sensitivity of motion start control of the lens group, relative to a detected rotation amount of a ring member, so that the motion start control does not start until a rotation amount, corresponding to the changed sensitivity, is detected. An example of an embodiment of this invention is described in the specification in the tenth embodiment, described in the specification at page 99, line 9, *et seq.*

Applicant submits that the invention, as recited in Claim 44, is not taught or suggested by the disclosure in Takahashi. Specifically, Takahashi relates to a powered zoom device for a camera. In Applicant's understanding, Takahashi discloses changing a lens speed, that is, the rotation speed of a lens motor, in accordance with focal length. See Takahashi, column 10, lines 1-11. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Takahashi does not teach or suggest at least the feature of Claim 44 of controlling motion of a magnification lens group in accordance with an output of the detection means, which detects a change amount of rotation of the ring member, to perform motion start control of the magnification lens group.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 44 is patentably distinguishable from Takahashi.

Summary

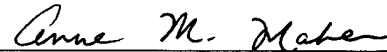
In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the independent claims are patentably distinguishable from the cited art. Accordingly, favorable consideration and allowance of the independent claims is respectfully requested.

In addition, Applicant submits that the dependent claims are patentably distinguishable from the cited art for at least the reasons discussed above for their respective base claims. In addition, Applicant submits that the dependent claims recite additional features further distinguishing them from the cited art, and respectfully requests individual consideration of each dependent claim.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C., office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address below.

Respectfully submitted,



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